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ABSTRACT

An annotated time line to help learning disabled high school students and their families plan for and choose an appropriate college was developed. A review of the literature concerning the transition of learning disabled students from high school to college is presented as are results of interviews with college learning disability specialists, high school guidance counselors and special educators, and college admissions staff. The completed time line and associated worksheets were then distributed to area experts for feedback and revisions. Among 10 recommendations derived from the study are development of a symposium of local colleges and organization of a regional workshop for students, parents, and support staff. An 18-item bibliography is included. An appendix presents a workshop outline for high school juniors and their parents which includes the full time line. Fourteen appendixes to the workshop provide such information as: sources of information on programs for learning disabled students; support service availability; a self-evaluation profile; quesions to ask colleges; a data sheet for college selection; information on recordings for the blind and talking books; summer skill improvement programs; college admissions exams; the college admissions letter; financial aid; and a self-advocacy packet. (DB)

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THE DEVELOPMENT OF A DEVELOPMENTAL, ANNOTATED TIME LINE FOR LEARNING DISABLED HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS PLANNING TO ATTEND COLLEGE

Societal Factors Affecting Education

by

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Regional Cluster

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A Practicum presented to Nova University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education

Nova University

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this practicum was to develop an annotated time line for learning disabled high school students and their families. The intent of the time line was to provide a major resource of information, so it could be used in programs to orient learning disabled students to the college selection process.

A thorough survey of the existing literature on the transition of learning disabled students from high school to college was conducted to develop a framework for the development of this time line. Interviews were conducted with college learning disability specialists, several high school guidance counselors, and local college admissions staff who deal with learning disabled applicants. Discussions were held with a director of Pupil Services and several high school resource teachers concerning the perceived needs of this target population. After the accumulation of these data, the time line was compiled, with the additions of worksheets to help the users structure their decision making and their planning. These materials were then dispersed to area experts for feedback and revisions.

Recommendations derived from this study were that: (1) an effective implementation strategy be prepared to distribute

these materials within the community; (2) high school guidance staffs need further information and training concerning the unique needs of the learning disabled college student; (3) parents of learning disabled students need a support group; (4) programs for parents need to be developed; (5) a symposium of local colleges should be developed; (6) a regional workshop for students, parents and support staff needs to be organized; (7) a format needs to be developed to provide for evaluation and revisions of the time line; (8) training needs to be implemented for support staff to effectively utilize the time line; (9) presentations should be made at national conferences; and (10) periodic updating of literature should be done.

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this practicum was to develop a time line by which local learning disabled (LD) high school students considering college could explore relevant developmental issues, and therefore, make an effective decision concerning their educational future. The Rochester, New York area high schools and colleges had previously provided little specialized support for this population in their decision making process around college attendance. Yet, New York State figures showed an increase of learning disabled students planning to attend higher education programs (Gloeckler, 1988).

Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) was the only college (of the eight local colleges) in the Rochester area with a specific program to address the needs of their enrolled learning disabled college student. As a result, many members of the special education and guidance community called RIT for information concerning the admissions process, and how learning disabled students could be successful. The number of learning disabled students on campus had grown from four in 1982 to over 100 in 1990 (Czamanske, 1990). Fifty six learning disabled freshmen were accepted for the fall quarter of 1990. Often

students came in for interviews with Special Services who were inappropriate for the program. Therefore, the problem was that a time line needed to be developed to provide these applicants with a systematic, organized set of materials which they could use to aid their search for a program that would best meet their needs.

Through research, meetings, interviews and consultations, a wide variety of support people were contacted and information was collected concerning the types of materials that would best meet some of the needs of the learning disabled college applicant. The time line and its accompanying worksheets were the actual products that resulted. The drafts of these materials were shared with a number of people in the local community for reaction and feedback. Revisions were made and the final product was completed.

BACKGROUND

A literature search was conducted to provide a foundation for this study. Transition, college, and learning disabilities were the major identifiers used to locate relevant material. The RIT library was the major source for this information.

This practicum is clearly related to the Societal Factors Affecting Education Seminar, since one of the major

issues for colleges is the declining number of entering college freshmen in the traditional 18-22 year old cohort. On the other hand, the state of New York is graduating record numbers of learning disabled students from high schools, and a significant portion of this population is eager to pursue higher education. With the increasing numbers of learning disabled students attending college, it seems imperative to insure sufficient high school preparation so that these students can successfully meet the demands at the college level ("How to Choose a College", 1988).

Secondary schools have improved the quality of service provided to the learning disabled students, resulting in students with increased confidence in their abilities and improved skills. This enhanced self perception has allowed these students to consider the possibility of college. In New York state alone, there are currently 150,000 school aged LD students, and 32,000 of these are between the ages of 16-21 (Gloeckner, 1988). With the decreasing numbers in this cohort, colleges are attempting to promote the services they have available, to appeal to this previously overlooked population. The learning disabled population has been considered an overlooked population with high potential for college success (Czamanske, 1990). Considering the decreasing size of the traditional college age population,

this group of students may provide a significant number of eligible freshman in the next few years.

Many guides have appeared which list schools that have programs to meet the needs of this population, but the students and their families have not been taught the necessary skills to know how to make effective use of this information. Although many source books are currently on the market, listing schools and the services they provide, a recent survey of this literature by Bursuck (1989) found that many of these documents are inaccurate and incomplete, misleading potential students and making their selection process even more difficult. Even if accurate at the date of publication, many of these programs are funded through grants or other soft monies, which may not exist the following year.

Support programs for the learning disabled are often dependent on the particular expertise of a single individual who may no longer be at the school and therefore the level of service may have changed. It is important that potential students verify any information they receive in print, to make sure the services are really provided (Czamanske, 1990). If staffing changes occur, services may or may not still be available.

Source books were found concerning various support programs for the learning disabled on college campuses, but few focused on the decision making process of transition from high school to college. According to Jackie Czamanske (1990), Learning Disabilities Specialist at RIT, many entering students did not know themselves and their needs well enough to know if RIT was really the right place for them. Since RIT students must declare majors prior to entrance, changing course of study may add several quarters of education to the student's academic program. The student who was more self aware upon entry to college, due to a thorough exploration of possible choices, was in a better position to be successful. This view was supported by Wooten (1988), who suggested that the learning disability was not the reason for failure on college campuses, but rather the lack of self reliance and self awareness on the part of the student. These qualities should be mastered during a secondary school program (Gloeckler, 1988).

A major issue in the effective transitioning from high school to college is the involvement of the parent (Seidenberg, 1986). Parents of learning disabled students have had to be integrally involved in their students' education. "Parents of LD students may be better advocates for their children, securing better services or providng more support" (Goldberg, 1982:36). Once their student was

identified as learning disabled, and received special education support, the parents were required to be an integral part of the development of the Individualized Educational Plans (IEP) required by law. Parental "understanding and encouragement as the youth struggles with school encounters is often the crucial support needed for success" (Cruikshank, 1979:271). In a study done at Clark University (Goldberg, 1982), learning disabled college students were compared extensively against a control group, in learning styles, learning abilities and learning problems. In exploring the types of help these students received during secondary school, it was found that the learning disabled students reported a higher percentage of help with academic tasks from their families than the control group. A significant number received help from either mother or father on spelling test review, editing papers, proofreading, reading aloud, typing and preparing for examinations.

Involvement with parents is listed as an important variable in many of the articles on learning disabled students, but few address specific responsibilities of the parents, or address the difficulty they may have in stepping back from their involvement in education once their student leaves home. In the 221 page report by the New York State Department of Education concerning learning disabled

students' transtion to post-secondary programs, only one paragraph was devoted exclusively to the needs of the parents and the specific interventions with them (Gloeckler, 1988). This is in contrast with the basic philosophy stated: involving parents is an important component of a successful transition program.

The HEATH (Higher Education and Adult Training for People with Handicaps) Resource Center's "Guide for Selecting PostSecondary Transition Programs" (HEATH, 1988) did make many recommendations for parents that appear helpful and valid. However, this pamphlet was designed to address the needs of the lower functioning learning disabled/special needs population, focusing primarily on programs for job training rather than academic pursuits.

Although several guides for high school parents existed, they were general in nature, and provided little direction as to specific ways the parents could be helpful in the college selection process (Davis, 1986). Many previous time lines did not actively involve parents in the transition process (Ness, 1989). Unlocking Potential (Scheiber. 1987), a step by step source book for learning disabled people concerning college or other post secondary choices, contains excellent material to help students make effective choices, and contains a chapter devoted to helping the parent assess how ready their student

is to continue in school. However, it does little to address the needs of the parent in learning how to let go.

Transition Programs

Although the colleges were aware of their own expectations, few high school special education programs adequately addressed future expectations with their students (Gloeckler, 1988). The lack of communication between high school guidance counselors and resource teachers has led to a void of information related to college expectations which had often resulted in poor decision making by students and parents, as well as a poor retention rate in post secondary programs.

The parents, and often the secondary school personnel, had little perspective of the skills beyond the academic that the student needed in order to be successful. According to Maeroff (1983), high schools and colleges need to better cooperate in determining the content and special skills considered essential for college entrance and success. His recommendations included the idea that students move at their own pace to transition effectively from high school to college. In addition, transitional programs should be developed that combine high school/college years and/or skills so that this transition could be more successful. "There are woefully few examples of interconnecting programs that enchance the kind of

continuum that educators endorse but seldom implement" (Maeroff, 1983:44). Some of the programs that provide such transition services for the non learning disabled population include Simon Rock in Massachusetts, Clarkson School in New York, the Bridgton School in Maine and Middle College in Queens, Long Island. Although their specific scope varied, the purpose of each of these programs was to provide a structured, supportive program to address the fact that "high school and college are two different cultures--different language, a different ethos, different accrediting systems, even different calendars..."(Maeroff, 1983:54). The literature about learning disabled students identified a common problem: dealing with change. In light of Maeroff's perspective, the learning disabled population would be even more in need of a structured program to allow for effective transition.

One program that had been specifically designed for the transition needs of the learning disabled student was Landmark College in Vermont; a two year residential college whose focus was to provide learning disabled students with an intensive learning experience designed to improve their eventual effectiveness at a four year liberal arts college. A strong emphasis was placed on the necessary study skills which helped students compensate for their different learning style. In addition, college courses were provided which used traditional curriculum and texts, so that

students could learn how to master the content through various modifications in presentation or strategy (Oliver, 1989). In addition, necessary socialization and living skills were addressed in this small, supportive residential setting.

Impact on Secondary Special Education

As more and more colleges provide services for the learning disabled student, they should be better able to identify the necessary skills and learning materials which the students should obtain prior to entry to college. This information will then need to be shared with the secondary providers, so that development of these skills can be infused into the secondary curriculum.

A comprehensive study was conducted in New York State, using two community colleges and secondary schools in their direct vicinity. The purpose of the study was to do a needs assessment of the learning disabled student entering the community college, and translate that information directly to the high school staff so that program adjustments could be made (Gloeckler, 1988). Recommendations for areas to address by the secondary school staff included:

1. teaching study skill units on college texts;

2. teaching a unit on self advocacy, including attending the Committee on Special Education (CSE) review to be involved in the planning process of their education;

3. teaching a variety of study skills, both in isolation and in relation to specific content area courses;

4. teaching SAT preparation;

5. teaching organization strategies.

Other references to curricular changes appeared in "The High School-College Connection: A Guide for the Transition of LD Students" (Seidenberg, 1986). A major reason given for the poor transition to college (meaning poor performance) was the inadequate preparation in high school. Further recommendations included: improved reading speed, improved written language skills and strategies that promote skill generalization. The overall recommendation was to teach the students to be more effective learners.

The HEATH Resource Center (1988) included a list of nonacademic goals which ought to be part of every secondary school learning disabled student's IEP. They recommended students should learn to:

1. make appropriate choices;

2. develop reasonable plans and follow them through;

3. improve ability to concentration on instructions and complete tasks;

4. behave in socially acceptable ways;

5. develop and enhance self-concept;

6. perceive and respond to social cues and non verbal behavior;

7. develop planning goal setting strategies;

8. express own strengths and weaknesses;

9. express needs to appropriate support person (become a self-advocate).

Additional recommendations outside of the high school classroom included specific involvement between the guidance staff and the college support services personnel (Gloeckler, 1988). Linkages were recommended between the family and the local office of Vocational Rehabilitation. Also, orientation sessions for the CSE were provided in order to provide them with information concerning the college options.

Linkage to Colleges

The New York State project presented an excellent model linking those secondary schools which directly feed a particular community college (Gloeckler, 1988). Yet, 39% of the learning disabled students in New York who are college bound are not attending local community colleges, and therefore a broader focus needs to be addressed. The specific secondary curricular issues would likely remain constant, regardless of the specific college attended, but additional components need to be addressed which help students and their families pick the most appropriate program to attend, based on matching the student's learning style to the presenting style of the school.

One approach to providing effective transition was to incorporate a formal "Individualized Transition Plan" as part of the educational program for every college bound learning disabled student ((Seidenberg, 1986). This could be done as an addendum to the regular IEP. Specific recommendations were made as to the development of strategies that would be helpful, including: a time line, specific goal setting, services needed and the use of a case manager (either guidance counselor or special educator) to monitor the progress of this agenda.

Another innovative model has been developed at Fairport High School, "Transition Responsibility Independence Program" (TRIP) where the senior learning disabled students in a resource room program have been involved in developing their own IEP's and conferencing with both their regular classroom teachers and their parents, using the resource teacher as a consultant, working on the development of their self awareness and practicing the self assertive skills that they will need to utilize in college.

The current learning disabled college students are pioneers, helping secondary educators to evaluate the effectiveness of their preparation for post secondary success. Hopefully, special educators will build on this growing foundation of knowledge and provide more thorough, effective programs for the college bound learning disabled student and his parents in the future.

PROCEDURES

Several procedures were necessary to complete this practicum. A thorough search of the appropriate literature on transition of learning disabled students from high school to college was first conducted in order to develop a philosophical basis for this study. In addition, specific organizations were contacted, including the HEATH Resource Center, Orton Dyslexia Society, Landmark College and the LD Hotline at the University of Connecticut, to further develop a framework for the timeline.

Interviews were conducted with the learning disability specialist at RIT, to find out the typical problems learning disabled students have in adjusting to life on campus. In addition, information was gained about what preparation seems to have the most impact towards college success.

Two local high school guidance counselors were contacted, to provide information about what specific steps students and parents should follow, in what order, and the expected time tables for College Boards, application deadlines, best times for visitations, etc.

Local college admissions staff who deal with learning disabled applicants were contacted to find out their specific requirements for skill development, documentation of disability, and their policies for interviews, tours and appropriate times for submission of material. Literature

was also received from Landmark College, a Vermont support service programs for the learning disabled college student.

A discussion was held with a local director of Pupil Services concerning the perceived needs of his district's graduating special education seniors. A brief outline for a time line was developed, and a commitment was made for providing an appendix to the district's guidance manual that focused specifically on the relevant issues for the learning disabled college student. Once developed, this would then be provided by the guidance staff to all special education students entering high school.

Several meetings were held with two local high school resource teachers who provided practical suggestions for the content of the time line handbook. They provided feedback from both students and parents about the issues, concerns and gaps in information currently available to them.

After the accumulation of these data, a handbook was compiled including a time line and supportive worksheets. The time line was developed to provide learning disabled high school students and their parents with a structure to explore the expectations and decisions which needed to be made about post secondary education. In addition, the time line focused on specific developmental processes which must be assesed in order for the students to evaluate their readiness to continue in the process. Accompanying annotated materials were developed to explain the criteria

on the time line, so that students were aware of the specific issues, and the resources available to help them progress in order to make these important decisions. The handbook addressed the following topics:

Sources of Information of Programs for LD Students

Types of Service

Support Service Availability

Self Evaluation Profile

Additional Questions to Ask Colleges

Data Sheet for College Selection

College Data Base

Recordings for the Blind and Talking Books

Local Summer Skill Improvement Programs

SAT/ACT Exams

College Admissions Letter

Financial Aid

The LD Student's Graduation Wish List

Self Advocacy Packet

Once the materials were compiled, several populations were asked to review the materials and react to them. The following persons were contacted for validation of the handbook:

1. Barbara Scheiber and Jeanne Talpers, the authors of Unlocking Potential: College and Other Choices for Learning Disabled People: A Step-by-Step Guide, in care of Adler and Adler Publishing.

2. Jackie Czemanske, RIT Learning Disability specialist.

3. A local Pupil Services Director, Mr. Kevin Ratcliffe, Fairport Central Schools.

4. Two local high school resource teachers, Mrs. Elizabeth Miller and Mrs. Susan Cummings.

5. Five special education teachers and one high school guidance counselor who were participating in a Special Educatation and Training Center (SETRC) workshop on "Helping the LD Student Effectively Transition to College".

6. The staff person (Susan Kurtz) at the Learning Development Center at RIT who writes the newsletters and develops professional materials for publication.

7. Dr. Linda Brent, professor of Special Education, University of Rochester.

Limitations

Several limitations to the study must be noted. First, these materials may have value only to a small percentage of the population. Secondly, the field of learning disabilities on the college level is so new and changing so rapidly that information provided today is often outdated before it reaches the consumer. Additionally, the use of these materials is limited because it is difficult to disseminate them to the appropriate students and parents. In addition, the materials may require a level of sophistication and training on the part of the user,

Definitions

The following definitions are provided to eliminate any confusion on the part of the reader:

annotated time line - sequential listing of tasks to complete, and documentation to further explain those tasks.

HEATH - Higher Education and Adult Training for People with Handicaps. National Clearing house on Postsecondary Education for Individuals with Handicaps, from the American Council on Education in Washington, D.C.

IEP - Individualized Educational Plan required of those students labeled by a Committee on Special Education as having a Handicapping Condition which impacts their learning. Parents, teachers, administrators are required to be involved in their development.

learning disability - condition certified by a psychologist, effecting student's performance in school.

post secondary - any program beyond high school designed to further a students learning(ie. technical school, two year college, community college, four year, etc.).

resource teacher - provides support to learning disabled students who are mainstreamed for their academic courses but require some modifications and/or supportive service in order to be successful in a public high school.

support service - program to provide academic and advocacy support for special needs students on a college campus. May be funded federally, by the state, locally or through grant support.

transition - students moving from one level of educational service to another; from high school to a post secondary setting, to further their education or training.

RESULTS

The product that resulted from this practicum can be found in Appendix A. After being reviewed by various experts (high school counselors, resource teachers, college support service providers, authors of other materials for learning disabled students and a university professor of special education), helpful feedback was received and incorporated into revising the handbook which appears in Appendix A. The nature of the revisions consisted primarily of format and style issues. No substantive issues were critiqued. In general, this feedback was extremely supportive and positive, encouraging the piloting of this material as soon as possible.

This handbook was developed for learning disabled students and their parents to guide them in their decision making process to find the appropriate postsecondary program to meet their specific needs. As a result of the development of the handbook, students, teachers, counselors

and parents now have specific materials to help them plan a successful transition from high school to post secondary programs.

DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Through reading, interviewing, attending conferences and dialoguing with members of the special education community, the need for the development of such a time line became apparent.

> Opportunities are expanding for postsecondary education, career options and life choices for people with disabilities. Legislation... plus the growing awareness of disabled people and their advocates require that stereotypes be reexamined. American schools are making great progress towards including qualified disabled students in education and training after high school (HEATH, 1989:1).

Yet, along with this improvement of opportunities has come the need for an organized problem solving model, to help LD students understand their choices and make appropriate decisions. The time line is a structured approach to this complex task.

A major implication drawn from this study was that a handbook needed to be developed that would provide effective support for the learning disabled students and their parents, when making decisions about transition to post secondary programs. An additional implication was the educational support that the Learning Development Center (LDC) at RIT could provide to local learning disabled

students and their families. The time line should provide a vehicle to improve relations between RIT and local secondary schools, so that requests for workshops, field trips, consultations and public presentations will increase, allowing RIT to serve as a local leader in the development of this field.

The recommendations derived from this study are as follows:

1. pursue copyright of the time line and accompanying materials;

2. increase the visibility of these materials in the community by sending a sample copy to each of the area high schools' guidance director;

3. encourage parents of learning disabled high school students to utilize the materials, and form support groups in which they can meet and share the research they are doing on specific programs, as suggested by the HEATH Resource Center (1989);

4. encourage school systems and the local learning disability chapter to provide programs for the parents to deal with transition as suggested by Ness (1989);

5. organize a symposium for all area colleges to meet and discuss the needs of the learning disabled freshman modeled after the work of Gloeckner (1988);

6. participate in presenting the materials at a regional workshop for learning disabled students and their

parents in the fall of 1990;

7. develop an evaluation form for the materials, and distribute it to students and parents who use it, to get concise and helpful feedback in order to improve their quality and usefulness;

8. train more special education teachers and guidance counselors in how to utilize these materials, to encourage broader distribution of the materials;

9. continue to disseminate the materials by presenting at the National Council of Exceptional Children conference, or the Orton Society conference in 1990;

10. conduct period literature searches to stay abreast of what is happening in other parts of the country in the field of transition of learning disabled students.

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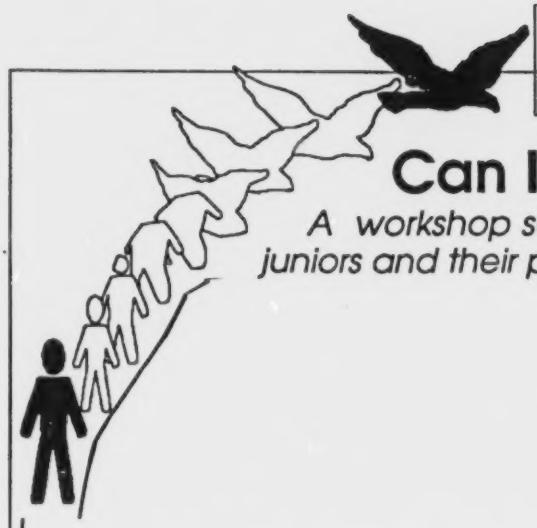
APPENDIX A

A HANDBOOK FOR LEARNING DISABLED STUDENTS AND THEIR PARENTS PLANNING FOR COLLEGE



Looking Ahead

Can I Make iT?

A workshop series for learning disabled high school juniors and their parents

Workshop Leaders:

Ellen Arnold
Jackie Czamanske

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Learning Development Center
Rochester Institute of Technology

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developed by Ellen Arnold, 1990

PREFACE

The purpose of this manual is to assist you and your parents in the decision-making process around college selection. Your learning disability adds a significant dimension to this already complicated process. This guide is meant to supplement the Planning for College guide already available from the Fairport Guidance Department, so please refer to it for general information about the college admission process. This manual contains questionnaires, information, charts and checklists, meant to help you further explore your own self awareness, and provide you with the appropriate information to enhance your college search process so you can choose colleges that will best meet your unique needs.

The time line is meant to provide you with a general idea of the ADDITIONAL issues which you, as a learning disabled student, should consider in your college search and recommends a time frame in which you should pursue each step.

Appendices A - M contain worksheets to provide some structure for your college search process. They are meant to help you make decisions about your own learning needs, your effective style, as well as the type of program which best will meet those needs. In addition, the materials have been developed to help you keep track of information as you accumulate it.

TIMELINE

9TH GRADE

-Plan college prep program of study.
-Consider career options by shadowing, visiting and talking with people in various careers.
-Become involved in the planning of your IEP.
-Carefully consider course selection to maximize later options.
-Work on plan to develop you study skills and learn to maximize your performance.

10TH GRADE

-Explore interests, values, decision making skills.
-Identify sources of college information by meeting with your counselor and your Resource teacher.
-Reevaluate/adjust course of study so that it is consistent with your goals.
-Take interest inventory and/or ASVAB.
-Take part in your IEP conference. Learn about your disability, what it is called and specifically how it influences you as a learner.
-Meet with school psychologist to have your psychological evaluation explained to you. Make sure you understand all aspects of the report and the subtests.

11TH GRADE

Sept.
-Identify sources of college information. (Appendix A)
-Meet with guidance counselor to develop list of appropriate schools.
-Use G.I.S. system in Guidance Library.(Appendix A)
-Obtain social security number.

October
-Register for PSAT. This is taken without modifications.

November
-Take PSAT.
-Review college guides to increase awareness of what type of school appeals to you.

December
-Review results of PSAT. Most LD students are disappointed in their results. Remember that the colleges will take your learning disability into account when evaluating your admissions package.
-Meet with counselor and discuss special testing for SAT or ACT. Decide which test might better meet your needs. (Most learning disabled students do better on the ACT because of the format of the test.)

January
-Pick out several schools to visit during February recess.
-Write or call for catalogs.
-Fill out data sheets on these schools. (Appendix E)
-Call for appointments/tours.
-Do self evaluation of own skills/strategies. (Appendix C)
-Add appropriate strategy development to goals in second semester IEP.

February
-Discuss financial issues with family.
-Evaluate your needs for modifications at the college level. (Appendix B)
-Develop list of questions to ask during college visits. (Appendix D)
-Visit at least one school in Rochester area, to get a perspective of what college is like, and to have a basis to compare your other visits.
-Fill out data sheet of that school visit, evaluating its' strengths/weaknesses and appropriateness for you. (Appendix E)
-Plan school visits for February recess, and fill out data sheets. (Appendix E)

March -Sign up for SAT/ACT (usually without modifications for first administration).
-Keep data sheets updated for all new schools. (Appendix B and Appendix F.)
-Decide on several other schools to visit over spring break.
-Make contacts for appointments/tours.
-Find out about your annual review with CSE. When scheduled, ask about updating your psychological exam prior to graduation, preferably with the WAIS-R (adult version of the standard Intelligence Test). You will need a current (within three years) psychological evaluation in order to be eligible for LD support at the college level.

April -Visit several other schools.
-Fill out capture sheets for each school.(Appendix E and Appendix F)
-Sign up for any appropriate achievement tests.

May -Continue gathering information about schools through reading,interviewing alumni or using GIS.
-Register with Recordings for Blind or Talking Books. (Appendix G)

June -Work with high school support staff to develop models for college application essays.
-Evaluate modifications used during this academic year and decide upon modifications that will be needed during college. (Appendix B)
-Make sure course selection for senior year is consistent with goals you have set for yourself for college.
-Develop IEP for yourself for the summer, including skills you will work on (ie. speed reading, writing.)
-Plan further visitations if you have not visited all the schools on your list. A note of caution about summer visitations. Although tours and admissions staff are usually available, often support program staff are not on campus. All information received about LD support will then have to be verified again the fall.

July-August -Visit schools and fill out data sheets. (Appendix E)
-Work on skill development.
-Take college transition course/or study skills course. (Appendix H)
-Call V.E.S.I.D. (Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities). They can be helpful in providing support for transition services, or mechanical

tools necessary to compensate for a disability. (716-325-5990)

12TH GRADE

September
-Develop IEP goals for fall term.
-Discuss goals with support staff.
-Schedule conferences with mainstream teachers to discuss goals/modifications.
-Begin all college applications.
-Check list of deadlines(turn in applications 2/3 weeks ahead of any deadlines).
-Sign up for modified SAT's/ACT's with your guidance counselor. (Appendix I)

October
-Write essays.
-Write self-disclosure letter of application. (Appendix J)
-Ask several teachers for recommendations, and provide them with stamped, addressed envelope.

November
-File FAF (Appendix K)
-Submit all applications to counselor for checking and mailing.

December
-Complete financial aid application.

January
-Rank college choices.
-Evaluate IEP goals. Meet with all teachers to conference and get feedback as to performance.
-Develop new goals for spring semester.
-Hold conference with parents as to progress and new goals.
-Send mid-year grades/reports to colleges.

March
-Revisit schools once acceptances are known.

April
-Look back at all capture sheets to help make final decision.
-Meet with guidance counselor to evaluate final choice.
-Pay deposit.
-Assess finances, plan payment schedule.

May
-Make list of graduation gifts desired, including those that may be helpful in college. (Appendix L)

June
-Make sure you have all the materials for your Self Advocacy Packet. (Appendix M)

APPENDIX A
SOURCES OF INFORMATION
PROGRAMS FOR LEARNING DISABLED STUDENTS

The following materials may be helpful in obtaining information about specific programs. But they are only guides. The provision of service is extremely diverse among colleges, and therefore the only reliable method of obtaining accurate information is from the college itself--the actual service provider (not just the admissions department). Therefore, you must first know your specific needs and find out if the college can meet those needs. Elements of service may be carried out under any of the following departments:

Coordinator of Handicapped Students
Dean of Students
Developmental Studies
Disabled Student Services Office
Learning Development Center
Learning Disabilities Specialist
Reading Lab/Writing Lab/Math Lab
Special Education
Study Skills Department
Support Services

Sometimes it takes some 'digging' to find out where the services are located, and if the college can actually provide the service you need. Also, some modifications may be available to some departments or divisions in the college, but not accessible to all programs. The only accurate information will be from the specific service providers themselves.

The GIS system located in your Guidance Library is an excellent resource. However, the specific command for LD programs is not completely accurate. Many other schools provide services for the LD student even though they are not listed in the GIS system under that category. Therefore, do not rule out a school just because it may not be listed has having LD services in this system.

Some books which may be useful as guides include:

College and the Learning Disabled Student: A guide to Program Selection, Development and Implementation, Charles T. Mangrum II and Stephen S. Strichart, Grune & Stratton, Inc. 1984.

Peterson's College Guide for the Learning Disabled, Charles T. Mangrum II and Stephen S. Strichart, Peterson's Guides, Princeton, New Jersey.

Unlocking Potential: College and Other Choices for Learning Disabled People--A Step-by-Step Guide. Barbara Scheiber and Jeanne Talpers, Adler & Adler, 1987. $12.95.

APPENDIX B

TYPES OF SERVICE

The field of learning disabilities is relatively new on college campuses. There are many varieties of programs available, and it is often difficult to match your needs with the college that can best meet those needs. Remember, regardless of the level of service required, you must meet the regular admissions standards of the college, and have the potential to do the work. In addition, you must be able to meet the academic standards set for all students. However, '504' (see below) prohibits discrimination in recruitment, admissions or treatment after admission. Colleges are required to make 'reasonable adjustments' so that you are not excluded from programs because of your disability.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is the federal legislation covering programs for the Learning Disabled at the college level. In part, it states:

> No otherwise handicapped individual...shall, solely by reason of his handicap, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.

Public Law 94-142 which covers Special Education services in the Public Schools does not effect post secondary programs.

Types of support available in post-secondary education programs vary from minimal, moderate or intensive. Each student must decide the level of service (s)he feels is necessary for the first year of study in order to find a school that can meet those needs.

MINIMAL SUPPORT:

Students are admitted and modifications may be available, but no specialized services are provided. No specific department for the learning disabled exist, even though a wide variety of content support may be available to ALL students. Staff support may be provided through Admissions, Counseling Center, Learning Center or Developmental Studies. In these settings the student must be able to:

- -clearly articulate disability in order to effectively advocate for self.
- -negotiate own modifications with professors.
- -have a high degree of confidence in their abilities, and be excellent creative problem solvers, with strong self determination and perseverence.

MODERATE SUPPORT:

Students are admitted and modifications are available, under the direction of a staff whose primary responsibility is to oversee the programs for the handicapped students. Sometimes these programs are in conjunction with services for the physically handicapped as well. Services available in these programs include specific seminars/workshops for the learning disabled in assertiveness training, understanding your learning disability, group counseling, and self advocacy training. In addition, academic support may be available including writing, spelling, notetaking, reading and media support like word processors, speling checkers, or a Kurzweil Reading Machine.

The staff of these programs act as advocates for the disabled students, running workshops for faculty, and helping negotiate specific modifications when necessary. They are different from a typical resource room teacher in that they will probably NOT provide specific content support--rather they will focus on general learning style and accomodation access.

Most of the programs that exist on college campuses today would fall under this category. However, a wide range of quality and focus of service exists. The better you know your own needs, the better chance you have to find a program that will best meet your needs.

INTENSIVE SUPPORT:

A few schools offer special programs for the learning disabled which are specifically designed to help students maximize their strengths and learn to effectively compensate for their disabilities. These programs offer both learning style and procedural support, and academic programs which are geared specifically to the learning disabled.

Some schools offering such service include:

Barat College (Illinois)	Learning Opportunities Program
Curry College (Massachusetts)	Program for the Advancement of Learning
Landmark College (Vermont)	Two year liberal arts programs just for learning disabled students
Southern Illinois Univeristy	Achieve Program

APPENDIX B

SUPPORT SERVICE AVAILABILITY

READ THE FOLLOWING LIST. CHECK THE MODIFICATIONS YOU ARE CURRENTLY USING, OR THINK YOU MAY NEED AT THE COLLEGE LEVEL.

When you visit or talk with a representative from the college, use this as a guide and write down any information you receive. Make sure you include the name of the person who 'guaranteed' you the service was available. Make sure you speak to the support service providers and not just admissions staff or college representatives.

SUPPORT SERVICE YOU NEED	AVAILABILITY	NAME OF STAFF
TEST MODIFICATIONS		
Alternative site		
Extended time		
Oral Administering of Test		
Reader		
Scribe		
Use of calculator		
Word Processor		
ALTERNATE METHODS OF EVALUATIONS (Projects, Papers, Practicums)		
CONTENT SUPPORT		
Lectures on tape		
Notetakers		
Texts on tape		
Tutoring available Professional staff or student tutors		
PERSONAL SUPPORT		
Advocacy Training		
Counseling		
Mentor		
Support group of other LD students		
ADDITIONAL CHARGE FOR SERVICES		
ADDITIONAL ISSUES OF IMPORTANCE FOR YOU		

NAME_____
DATE_____

APPENDIX C

SELF EVALUATION PROFILE

THE PURPOSE OF THIS SELF EVALUATION IS TO LOOK AT YOUR OWN SKILLS AND COMPARE THEM TO THE SKILL LEVELS NECESSARY TO BE SUCCESSFUL AT THE COLLEGE LEVEL.

THE LEFT HAND COLUMN CONTAINS A LIST OF SKILLS. EVALUATE YOURSELF HONESTLY. IF YOU NEED HELP ASSESSING THESE SKILLS, TALK WITH YOUR COUNSELOR OR RESOURCE TEACHER. AFTER EACH SKILL, CHECK THE APPROPRIATE COLUMN: O.K. (OK) OR NEEDS IMPROVEMENT (NI).

THE RIGHT HAND COLUMN GIVES YOU SOME INFORMATION AS TO THE EXPECTATIONS ON THE COLLEGE LEVEL, TO HELP YOU PUT YOUR SKILLS IN PERSPECTIVE.

	OK	NI	COLLEGE EXPECTATIONS
READING			
-sounding out words -remembering vocabulary -concentrating on what I read -understanding what I read -remembering what I read -reading quickly without loss of comprehension			Formula for figuring amount of work: 1 hr in class=2 to 3 hrs out of class (based on a reading speed of approximately 400 wpm).
WRITING			
-writing neatly -organizing my ideas -using correct grammar/ punctuation -expressing my thoughts clearly -using correct spelling -using sophisticated -vocabulary -using dictaphone -fluent on word processor			Most papers must be typed or word processed. All writing, regardless of content area, is expected to be carefully proofed for spelling and mechanics. Few in class assignments are handed in, so outside modifications are easy to arrange.

NAME _____
DATE _____

	OK	NI	
MATH -using math facts accurately -remembering math facts -doing word problems -solving complex problems -learning math concepts -memorizing formulas/steps -applying formulas appropriately			Modifications for calculators are megotiable. Math content support is available through a math lab. Few tests are open book. the higher the level, the more application level is expected.
TIME MANAGEMENT -scheduling ample time to complete work -planning ahead for long term assignments -remembering tasks or appointments -completing tasks on time			This must be an independent skill, because staff are not available to monitor time for you. This is a major problem for most freshmen, and an essential skill for success.
CONCENTRATION -blocking distractions -focusing on reading assignment until completion -attending during lectures -sitting still while working -thinking tasks through to their conclusion			Must be self directed, self monitored. Find study atmosphere that will decrease distractions (ie. study carroll).

NAME_____

DATE_____

	OK	NI	
NOTETAKING -listening skills -picking out key points -knowing what to write -use of abbreviations -effective style of notes -easy to read -development of study guides -making summary notes			Professors expect this skill to be developed. They do not try to provide you with lectures on the board. Sometimes lectures are totally supplemental to book, and therefore notes must be good quality to prepare to exams.
STUDY TECHNIQUES -use effective strategies -study/review daily -prepare ahead -use glossary/dictionary -know best learning style -know how to adapt any -material to your best style -know your best time to study			You must know yourself well and be resourceful in creating tools to help you study effectively. This requires motivation and self-discipline.
TEST TAKING STRATEGIES -multiple choice -true/false -fill ins -open ended questions -essays -various levels of questions -misunderstanding directions -misreading questions			Different programs use different evaluation techniques. Ask ahead and try to pick programs that evaluate you in your areas of strength, not weakness.

NAME_____
DATE_____

APPENDIX D

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS TO ASK COLLEGES

Once you have completed the Self-Profile (Appendix C), you should be able to generate many specific questions relevant to your learning needs. Use this form to generate them into questions.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

The following are some general questions that you also might consider asking. CHECK the ones that seem relevant to you.

___Have there been other learning disabled students on campus? In what majors/departments. How successful have they been?

___What are the admissions standards? How heavily do they weigh the SAT/ACT. How much weight do they put on recommendations?

___Are there any waivers for LD students (ie. foreign language if required for graduation, etc.)

___How available are the faculty to the students? How many hours per week are they expected to have office hours?

___What are the requirements to be a full time student?

___Are study skills courses credit bearing?

___What is faculty view of test modifications?

___How does my academic background compare to the other students who will be admitted?

___What are the hours of the word processing center?

___Is there food available after cafeteria hours?

___Would my specific needs be taken into account when providing a dorm assignment?

NAME _____
DATE _____

APPENDIX E

DATA SHEET FOR COLLEGE SELECTION

COMPLETE THIS THE FIRST TIME TO EVALUATE YOUR OWN NEEDS. THEN COMPLETE ONE FOR EACH SCHOOL YOU VISIT.

NAME OF COLLEGE _____
ADDRESS: _____
PHONE #: _____
SIZE OF UNDERGRADUATE POPULATION: _____
SIZE OF GRADUATE SCHOOL: _____
SIZE OF COMMUNITY _____
CLOSENESS TO A CITY _____

DISTANCE FROM HOME:
BY CAR: _____
OTHER: _____

WEATHER: _____

MAJORS CONSIDERED	AVAILABILITY	DEPT. HEAD	PHONE #

ACTIVITIES IMPORTANT TO ME	AVAILABILITY

DORMITORY ROOMS #'S PER ROOM FOR FRESHMEN 1 2 3 4

BATHROOMS: SHOWER TUB HOW MANY PEOPLE SHARE A ROOM

DORMS: OPEN/LOCKED CO-ED/SINGLE SEX
QUIET/ROWDY STRICT/LENIENT
SMOKING/NON

DINING ROOM ACCOMODATIONS 1 2 MORE
HOURS/AVAILABILITY: _____
QUALITY OF FOOD: _____
CHOICES limited varied

QUALITY OF STUDENT LIFE: _____

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NAME_____
DATE_____

KIDS MOSTLY: like me different from me

MISSION STATEMENT/PHILOSOPHY OF SCHOOL: _____
_____

LENGTH OF PROGRAM 1 YR 2 YR 3YR 4YR 5YR

CALENDAR QUARTER 4-1-4 4-4-1 TRIMESTER SEMESTER

FACULTY/STUDENT RATIO _____

TEACHING FORMATS _____
_____
_____

TYPICAL FORMS OF EVALUATIONS:

OF TESTS PER GRADING PERIOD 1/2 3/4 5/6 7/8
MOST TYPICAL TYPES OF TESTS essay short answer Xc

QUANTITY OF PAPERS REQUIRED 1/2 3/4 5/6 7/8

FREQUENCY OF ASSIGNMENTS daily weekly biweekly longterm

PROJECTS/HANDS ON _____

MODALITIES OF INSTRUCTION:
lecture_____
text_____
hands on_____
video_____
computer_____
audio tape___
other_____

CAMPUS CLASS ATTENDANCE POLICY: _____

REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADUATION: _____

LIBRARY HOURS _____

STRENGTHS OF INSTITUTION: _____

SUCCESS RATE OF GRADUATES: (PLACEMENT %)_____

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NAME _____
DATE _____

SUMMARY: AFTER RESEARCHING THIS SCHOOL, AND THINKING OF HOW WELL IT MATCHES WHO I AM AND WHAT I NEED, I FEEL: _____
_____
_____

NAME_____
DATE_____

APPENDIX F

COLLEGE DATA BASE

THIS PAGE IS MEANT FOR YOU TO KEEP TRACK OF THE GENERAL INFORMATION ON THREE SCHOOLS AT ONCE. FILL THIS IN AS WAY OF KEEPING ALL THE INFORMATION YOU NEED TOGETHER.

	School	School	School
NAME OF SCHOOL			
ADDRESS			
PHONE #			
CONTACT PERSON ADMISSIONS			
INTERVIEW DATE			
SUPPORT SERVICE PROVIDER			
PHONE #			
APPLICATION RECEIVED (DATE)			
APPLICATION SENT			
LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION SENT			

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS_____

_____

_____

NAME _____
DATE _____

APPENDIX G
RECORDINGS FOR THE BLIND AND TALKING BOOKS

One major source of taped texts is:

Recording for the Blind, Inc. (RFB)
20 Roszel Road
Princeton, New Jersey, 08540
609-452-0606

They provide recorded educational materials to visually, physically and perceptually handicapped. The materials are loaned free of charge for those found eligible for service. Borrowers are permitted to keep up tapes for up to one year.

In order to be eligible, a learning disabled person must submit an application form, establishing their need for the service. This must currently be signed by a physician.

Students who have made use of the service have recommended that in order for it to be of the most help, you must:

-submit requests as early as possible in the previous school year (spring for the following fall). This is often difficult to do since professors are not always sure of the texts they will be using.

-if the text is a new one, you need to submit a special request, and two copies of the printed text. Mail these first class if possible.

-be aware that recordings are mailed in installments, and if the professor is going to skip around in the text, you need to know in advance which portions you need first.

TALKING BOOKS

This program is maintained by the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped. Their address is:

The Library of Congress (NLS)
1291 Taylor Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20542
202-882-5500

This service is free to eligible persons, and includes a wide variety of classical and current literature. These materials are distributed through regional libraries. A doctor must certify that the student has a reading disability due to organic dysfunction.

You will need a special four track cassette machine in order to play their materials. These are sometimes available from the agencies.

APPENDIX H

SUMMER SKILL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMS

Monroe Community College - Developmental Studies Program offers classes in developmental reading, writing and/or math. Regular MCC tuition is charged, but no credit is received.

Rochester Institute of Technology - College Anticipation Program. This is a six week program for students who have graduated from high school and have been accepted to any college for the fall. Students take a Psychology course and then related study skills seminars in which they improve their approaches to mastery of the content for this credit bearing course.

Rochester Institute of Technology - Showcase of Study Skills. This program is designed to enrich your current study skills, by introducing you to the latest, most effective, efficient ways to master college material. Sessions include: Time Management, Textbook Reading, Lecture Notetaking, Test Taking and Research Techniques. Last week in June, two hours/day. Cost $20/session or $80 for the series.

Some colleges have special summer programs for the learning disabled, for either the summer before senior year, or after. Some colleges to contact are:

Adelphi University

Curry College

Landmark College

Other materials that may be helpful include:

"Where There's A Will There's An A." Videotape.

"Speed Reading", Time-LIfe Videotape.

"Learning Power: Strategies for College Success". This is a series of four video tapes prepared by Jane Munt and Susan Donovan, of RIT LDC. They are available for puchase through Campus Connections, RIT, Rochester New York 14623.

APPENDIX I

SAT/ACT EXAMS

These test scores are one part of your college admissions packet They are not the major criteria. If your learning disability impacts your test performance, you need to let the college know that through your letter of disclosure (Appendix J).

One way to demonstrate the impact of standard test conditions on your disability is to take the test once without modifications, and then a second time with the necessary modifications which are consistent with modifications that are eligible for through your IEP. This gives the college admissions staff a clear idea of how important a particular modification may be for you. However, some LD students consistently score low and therefore, the burden of taking these exams may be too great. Not all schools require either of these exams. If this is an area of concern, make sure you discuss it during your interview on campus.

The process for a modified test is different that the regular administration. You must see the Guidance Counselor who is in charge of administering the College Board testing program. Obtain a copy of the application for alternative testing.

Test dates for alternative testing do not have to be consistent with the standard tests, but if alternative dates are utilized, you may have to pay for a proctor. Requests to take modified exams must be made well in advance of the test date.

Test modifications that can be utilized include:

- Extended Time,
- Use of a cassette or a reader,
- Alternative Test site,
- Use of an aide to mark the answers,
- A large-type version.

APPENDIX J

COLLEGE ADMISSIONS LETTER

The purpose of an admissions letter is to help explain your transcript and provide some background to help the admissions officer have a better sense of who you are. Your goal is to provide information and to impress the reader with how well you know yourself and how committed you are to be successful. The following outline is meant to be a guide for you in putting together your letter. Feel free to amend this as appropriate, to meet your needs.

I. The reason for this letter:

A. Why your transcript may not reflect the real you.

B. Why you think this school is right for you.

II. Your strengths as a learner:

A. Classes you have done well in.

B. Intellectual strengths.

C. Interests.

D. Achievements.

E. What makes you unique.

F. How you learn best.

III. Your weaknesses as a learner:

A. Specific skills.

B. Documented deficiencies.

IV. Modifications:

A. Those that have been helpful to you in the past.

B. Services you feel you will need from the school in order to be successful.

C. Availability of necessary services.

V. Why you are a good risk.

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NAME _____
DATE _____

APPENDIX K

FINANCIAL AID

Although the actual steps for applying for financial aid are the same for LD students, there are some additional considerations. Some colleges, with extensive support services, charge an additional fee for these services. This is not always clearly defined in the general catalogue, but you can receive this information from the LD support staff.

An additional consideration is that often LD students need to take a decreased course load, in order to be successful. This extends the length of time it will take to complete a program. Although colleges are usually willing to provide for this modification, financial support is sometimes restricted to full time students, which is generally considered 12 academic credits. This may be either three or four courses, depending on the program. If you are considering taking less than that, especially your first year, you need to explore financial aid for part time students. Related to this is the fact that some support services programs are not able to provide support if students are taking less than 12 credits.

Although loan packages are usually renewable for an extended number of semesters, some grants and scholarships are not available for more than the standard four years. These issues need to be explored.

NAME _____
DATE _____

APPENDIX L

THE LD STUDENTS GRADUATION WISH LIST

FRANKLIN ACE SPELLER	A small calculator size computer which provides convention spelling even when word typed in is spelled phonetically.
FRANKLIN SPELLER/THESAURUS	For those students whose vocabulary skills are weak, and may need a handy thesaurus to help with definitions of new vocabulary, as well as dictionary pronuncation guides.
QUALITY TAPE RECORDER	Especially for those students who may be using books on tape. Make sure you have a model that has a counter, as well as good quality sound reception.
VOICE ACTIVITATED TAPE RECORDER	For students whose note taking skills are weak and may need to tape lectures to be transcribed at a later time.
WORD PROCESSING PACKAGE	Check to see what system is used on your campus and its availability (including all night access). You may not need hardward, or you may prefer your own computer but use their printers. Knowledge of word processing will be a necessary skill.

NAME_____
DATE_____

APPENDIX M

SELF ADVOCACY PACKET

In order to access support services at the college level, there is some documentation you may need. It is best to have this material available so that you can produce it at any time. Keep the originals in a safe place (ie.safety deposit box). If you don't have them available, service may be delayed until they have been received.

___UPDATED PSYCHOLOGICAL This must be within three years. It can be a WISC-R, although a WAIS-R is preferred by most college programs. Make sure this includes:

___SPECIFIC SUBTEST SCORES - and make sure you understand them.

___STATEMENT OF DISABILITY - by a licensed psychologist, giving the specific nature of the disability

___ACADEMIC MODIFICATION RECOMMENDATIONS - these are helpful program coordinator. A letter from your resource teacher would be helpful here as well.

___HIGH SCHOOL TRANSCRIPT Even though you have sent one to the admissions office, it may not have gotten to the support service provider. So have your own copy in case any questions arise.

___LAST IEP By going through this with the support service provider, you can clearly focus on your academic needs and concerns.

___MEDICAL BACKGROUND If you are on any medication, or have any specific medication concerns, make sure you have written verification .

___NAME OF YOUR V.E.S.I.D COUNSELOR IS _____.
V.E.S.I.D. may be helpful to you in getting further testing, if needed. Also, if equipment is needed, they may be helpful.
They can also provide you with a vocational assessment.

___RECORDINGS FOR THE BLIND Updated membership, and equipment on loan, if appropriate.